

The Bousfield Diaries

A MIDDLE-CLASS FAMILY IN LATE VICTORIAN BEDFORD



Edited by
Richard Smart



2007

THE BEDFORDSHIRE
HISTORICAL RECORD SOCIETY

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THE BOYDELL PRESS

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Abbreviations

BA	Bachelor of Arts
BHRS	Bedfordshire Historical Record Society
BLARS	Bedfordshire and Luton Archives and Record Service
BR	Blue Ribbon
B Works	Britannia Iron Works
BWTA	British Women's Temperance Association
CEB	Charlotte Eliza Bousfield
CETS	Church of England Temperance Society
CEWU	Church of England Women's Union
COR	Crown Office Row, where Will had his chambers
GF	Greyfriars Blue Ribbon Room
L&NW	London and North Western Railway
LNWR	London and North Western Railway
LRCP	Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians
MA	Master of Arts
M Hall	Memorial Hall, London
MM	Mothers' Meeting
M Meeting	Mothers' Meeting
MP	Member of Parliament
MRCs	Member of the Royal College of Surgeons
Mr FH	Frederick Howard
Mr JH	James Howard
OKR	Old Kent Road, Ted's home and surgery
PC	postcard
QC	Queen's Counsel
S Army	Salvation Army
WTAU	Women's Total Abstinence Union

Introduction

If Oscar Wilde is to be believed, keeping a personal diary was a common activity among middle class women in the late nineteenth century, but the two he satirises so delightfully in *The Importance of being Earnest* are young and unmarried. Charlotte Bousfield was long married and not far off being a grandmother when she first took up her pen.

These words are appropriate, not only because they encapsulate what this volume is about, but also because they were written by John Hamilton, the great-grandson of Charlotte Bousfield, the diarist herself, as the introduction to his own transcript of her diaries.

Diaries were written and read long before the nineteenth century, and they come in many forms. The Paston letters are the earliest English example, dating from the fifteenth century. Although a collection of letters, rather than strictly a diary, they are similar to the Bousfield diaries in that they constitute a record of the events in the lives of a middle-class family, largely from the point of view of the woman who is in many ways at its centre, Margaret Paston. One of the fascinations of reading both of these accounts, so far apart in time, is the way in which the personality of the writer gradually emerges.

Another similarity they share is that the audience, the readership, is defined. The Paston letters are each addressed to one person. Charlotte's diaries begin in 1878 with the expression of her hope that they 'will be profitable to myself & perhaps interesting to my children'.¹ This seems to have been the case, as her entry for 26 February 1883 states that although she has considered giving it up 'my children seem to be so much interested in listening to some of the records of the past with which I occasionally amuse them that for their sakes more than by my own wish in the matter I will continue a remembrance of the chief events of our family life'.

And so she did, and the audience for whom she was writing would understand what she was saying. They would put faces to names, and call up contexts unconsciously and without effort in order to bring to the text a subtext of shared experience, and so to make full sense of it. It is the purpose of this introduction and of the notes (which are profuse) to attempt to achieve for the reader today something of the richness which Charlotte's diaries would have had for her own family. She would have been surprised to know that her words have reached a much wider audience than that which she envisaged. One wonders what opinion she would have had (and she would certainly have had one) about the web logs, or blogs, which are the twenty-first century's contribution to the concept of a diary?

It is with pleasure, therefore, that the Bedfordshire Historical Record Society (BHRS) is publishing the Bousfield diaries because they not only paint a vivid picture of the lives of a large family centred in Victorian Bedford, but they extend

¹ See Plate 2.

beyond both family and local history to document national and international events, covering the period between 1878 and 1896.

Charlotte Collins and Edward Bousfield – their early lives

Charlotte Bousfield, the diarist, was born Charlotte Eliza Collins and married Edward Tenney Bousfield in 1853.² Charlotte herself came from a family whose lives were centred in a county much further west than Bedford. In the early years of the nineteenth century Charlotte's grandmother, Mrs Cox, a widow, was living with her only unmarried daughter, also named Charlotte, in Seaton, on the south coast of Devon.³ Mrs Cox was a nonconformist and as the only place of worship in Seaton was the Anglican church, she attended the nearest nonconformist chapel which was in the nearby village of Beer. As she grew older she could no longer manage the walk, and offered her own home for worship, and then was instrumental in having a little chapel built for herself and her neighbours, applying to the local ministerial training college⁴ for a preacher. As a result in 1823 Robert Collins, a young man of 21, was sent to visit Seaton every Sunday to take the services. Charlotte herself writes:

Both the work and the Widow's Daughter so interested him that the end of his Term of 5 years in college, during which he ministered in his frequent turn in the Widow's home as Preacher, [was] concluded by his marriage with her Daughter Charlotte E Cox.

The wedding took place in 1827 in Seaton church,⁶ and soon afterwards Robert was moved to Braunton, a village on the north Devon coast near Barnstaple. Here the couple lived in the manse, and this is where Charlotte the diarist was born on 10 July 1828. Her early years were marked by the birth of her six siblings, and by the regular changes of home occasioned by her father's ministry in the Congregationalist church. They moved from Braunton to Hindon in Wiltshire (1830), to Newnham-on-Severn (c. 1835), then to Tetbury in Gloucestershire (1841), and on to Stockbridge in Hampshire in 1854. Here it was that her mother died in 1858. Charlotte reflects in the diaries that her mother's last words were 'my sins are forgiven; I'm going to glory'. In a letter written much later⁷ she writes to a young relative: 'If by any chance you should go to or through Stockbridge in the little burying place of the Congregational Chapel [is] to be seen my dear mother's grave & headstone. My Father lived at Stockbridge at the dates on it, & I lost my Mother & one dear Sister (who are both buried there) during his residence in the last house on the right hand side, at the lower end of the village.'⁸ She was to lose all but one of her remaining siblings by 1863, the last of them, her brother Alfred, dying some time before 1881.⁹ In view of this history of early mortality in her family, it is not

² See Plate 1 for Charlotte's portrait, painted by her daughter Hattie.

³ See family trees in Appendix 1.

⁴ The Axminster Nonconformist Academy.

⁵ in a paper written after the diaries entitled 'How My Parents Met'.

⁶ Before 1837, only Quakers and Jews were exempt from being married in the Anglican parish church.

⁷ to Violet, her grandson Alec's wife, undated but probably from December 1924.

⁸ See diary entry for 10 July 1879.

⁹ See diary entry for 1 October 1884.

surprising that Charlotte was always concerned about the health of her own husband and children.

Little is known of Charlotte's childhood, except that she was brought up in a strict nonconformist household, and remained throughout her life true to its principles, however difficult it might be. 'Am "I", as I am sure my children think me, narrow-minded, strait laced & puritanical?' she asks herself in the entry dated 18 January 1882. To which she answers: 'Or do I so love my Lord & Master as to desire in all I do to serve & please Him? I do trust the latter is the case.'

Certainly, as the oldest child, Charlotte would have had to start earning her living early in life in order to support her younger siblings. She began work aged 16 in 1844 in Buckingham as a governess, the only career open to a middle-class woman at this time. Two or three years later she moved further north to take up a post as a teacher in Newark, at a school known rather grandly as Mrs Bousfield's Ladies Seminary. Mrs Frances Bousfield, the proprietor of the school, and her husband William, both Methodists, were the parents of seven children, coincidentally the same number as the Collins children. The third of these was Edward Tenney Bousfield, Charlotte's future husband.

The years of Edward's childhood were ones of varied fortunes for the family. From 1832, his father, William, and William's elder brother Edward Little, were partners in the family's ironmonger's business, set up by their father, also an Edward.¹⁰ Edward Little, however, was ambitious to make his mark in local politics, and the next years were to prove his political abilities. He became a councillor in 1836, and eventually in 1842 was elected mayor, Newark's first citizen.

But success in local politics was not mirrored in the business field, and three years later the family business failed, and was taken over by a local lawyer, a process which avoided formal bankruptcy proceedings. Edward Little, disgraced, then disappeared from Newark, and has not been traced. William, with seven children to maintain, the youngest only eight years old, managed to rent premises and carry on the family business.

The rapid rise and equally rapid fall of his uncle must have been a disturbing experience for the young Edward Tenney, but soon after this he met Charlotte Collins when she arrived in Newark to work for his mother. Charlotte was one year older than Edward, both of them in their early twenties. In 1853 they were married in the Congregational chapel in Tetbury where the bride's father was minister at the time, and then settled in Newark, where their first two children were born, William Robert, named after his grandfathers and known as Will, in 1854, and Edward Collins, named after his father and mother, known as Ted or Eddie, in 1855, and referred to as such here in order to distinguish him from his father, Edward.

Charlotte's husband not only set up a new home in Newark at this time, but also a business, of which the only record located is of its termination, which took place on the 11 March 1857. The firm was named in the *London Gazette* as Nicholson and Bousfield, and its business as 'iron founders, engineers, and agricultural implement manufacturers'.¹¹ Edward's partner was William Neuzam Nicholson, whose father was also the owner of an iron foundry, and a more successful one than the Bous-

¹⁰ See family tree in Appendix 1.

¹¹ *London Gazette*, 1 May 1857.

field's. The Nicholsons were beginning to make a reputation for themselves, winning prizes for their products and showing them at the Great Exhibition of 1851.¹²

The interpretation of these events is problematical. Perhaps Edward wanted to restore his family's reputation, and to start a new business incorporating the Bousfield name. In any case it failed, and in 1856 the family moved to Sticklepath, a village on the northern edge of Dartmoor. It seems a strange move, because the Bousfields had no connections in the west country (though of course Charlotte had). It was in this small village that once again Edward attempted unsuccessfully to set himself up in business: after two years he lost money, gave it up and sought employment elsewhere. Some twenty years later, after they had settled in Bedford, Charlotte reflected that she 'could write quite a history of how [Edward] came here a young man ... after having been made willing to become a servant instead of a Master, by his losses as one in the two short years preceding our coming to Bedford from Sticklepath'.¹³ And so, with the success of his application to join a well established agricultural machinery manufacturing company in Bedford, he became, reluctantly, 'a servant instead of a Master'. The business Edward joined was known as J. & F. Howard Ltd.

The family, with their third son, John Ebenezer, just one month old, moved to Bedford in September 1858, and were to stay in the town for 45 years.

The Bousfields' Bedford

In the 1850s, when the Bousfields settled there, Bedford was a small rural market town, with a population of some 12,000.¹⁴ Perhaps it reminded them of Newark, a market town of similar size, also centred around a medieval castle and straddling a river. In Bedford, there was hardly a trace of the industrialisation which was already far advanced in other towns and cities. Industrialisation in the nineteenth century involved both the use of a centralised production system using steam driven machines in factories to produce goods with maximum efficiency; and also effective transport facilities to move coal to the sites of production and to take the finished products to their markets. Bedford had neither of these, though both were present in an embryonic form.

The introduction of industrialisation in Bedford is largely the contribution of the imaginative and ambitious Howard family. The business which Edward joined in 1858 was founded by John Howard, 'old Mr Howard' as Charlotte refers to him in the diaries. Howard was schooled in Bedford, then apprenticed as an ironmonger, and in 1835 set up a shop at 35 High Street, with an iron founding workshop behind it, in what in 2007 is used as a car park. Agricultural implements soon became an important part of their trade. John's eldest son James joined the business and developed an interest in designing improved ploughs. In 1850, James' youngest brother Frederick also joined the business and the two brothers took it over from their father (hence, J. & F. Howard Ltd).

Progress at Howard's was rapid, for the middle years of the century were a golden age for farming in Britain. The rapid rise in population and its increasing concentra-

¹² This was nothing compared with the reputation of William Nicholson's son and grandson, who were the artists Sir William and Ben Nicholson.

¹³ See diary entry for 7 October 1879.

¹⁴ Pictured on the dust cover.

tion in urban centres resulted in growing demand for food and particularly grain. The rural economy in Bedfordshire was basically an arable one, and the workshop behind the High Street shop was kept busy supplying the increasing demand for agricultural implements to maximise the productivity of the land and its tillers. First came ploughs. The 'Howard plough' had become well-known, and in 1851 it won a prize at the Great Exhibition, but soon a number of new implements were developed: hoes and harrows, mowing machines, horse drawn rakes, seed drills.

The workshop was now no longer large enough to enable the level of production to match that of demand and in 1856 work began on the construction of a new factory, the Britannia Iron Works, which was completed in 1859.¹⁵ It was the pride of Victorian Bedford, and represents a triumphant example of the entrepreneurial instinct. Its presence marked the arrival of industry to the town, and it soon acquired national and international renown, visited by the Italian Nationalist leader Garibaldi in 1864, and by a Japanese Prince (Satsuma) in the late 1860s, both of whom were interested in modernising their respective countries.

What gave it this reputation? The factory was remarkable for the use it made of what are now known as machine tools – a journal in 1860 commented on the 'extent to which they [Howard's] carry out moulding by machinery ... a visit to the Howard factory would amply repay those interested in the extensive production of castings of iron of one particular pattern'.¹⁶ The Britannia Iron Works was one of the largest factories of its kind in the world, covering some 20 acres. Its growth continued throughout the 1870s, and by 1881 it employed 650 men and apprentices¹⁷ and produced some 10,000 finished implements a year, which were exported from Bedford nationally and internationally.

Such an enormous undertaking required an efficient system of rail transport to transport heavy and bulky goods, bringing in coal and iron ore for the foundry and taking the finished products for delivery. Bedford had come late to this aspect of industrialisation, as it had to the factory system. The first railway line was opened by the London and North Western Railway (LNWR) in 1846. It ran from St John's station, south of the river, to Bletchley – very limited in its direct coverage.¹⁸ It took eleven years before the next development occurred, the Midland Railway line from Bedford to Hitchin, whence the trains would join the Great Northern Line to London. Bedford's Midland Station was opened in 1859,¹⁹ and the Midland's direct line to London via Luton was finally completed in 1868, along with the magnificent St Pancras Station.²⁰

The opening of the Britannia Iron Works in 1859 occurred just after the line to Hitchin had become available. The factory had its own internal railway and goods station, with connections to the Midland and to the LNWR line. The lithograph of the Britannia works from the north side (Plate 11) shows this clearly, together with the barges on the River Ouse, which could transport materials to and from places as far downstream as the port of Kings Lynn.

¹⁵ See Plate 11.

¹⁶ *The Engineer*, 20 July 1860, and quoted in Hamilton, *Glad for God*, p. 162.

¹⁷ The figures are those given by Frederick Howard which appear in the census of 1881.

¹⁸ See Plates 18 and 20.

¹⁹ See Plates 19 and 20.

²⁰ See F.G. Cockman, *The Railway Age in Bedfordshire*, BHRS vol. 53 (Bedford: The Society, 1974).

One important result of the new opportunities for employment provided by the Iron Works was an increase in the population, as individuals and families moved to Bedford, and particularly to the areas south of the river to live close to the works. This continued until the late 1870s as the factory steadily expanded its floor space and the number of its employees. Table 1, below, shows the numerical size of, and the percentage increase in, the population of Bedford itself and of the parish of St Mary's, one of the five within the town, in which the Iron Works was situated. The increase in the population of both is very rapid, but this is particularly pronounced in St Mary's, which saw a three-fold increase between 1851 and 1891, a much more rapid increase than that of the population of the nation as a whole, which increased by a factor of less than two in this period.

Table 1. Population of Bedford and the parish of St Mary's Bedford, 1851 to 1901

<i>Year</i>	<i>Bedford</i>	<i>% increase</i>	<i>Decade</i>	<i>St Mary's</i>	<i>% increase</i>	<i>Decade</i>
1851	11,693			1670		
1861	13,413	14.7	1851-60	1869	11.9	1851-60
1871	16,850	25.6	1861-70	2574	37.7	1861-70
1881	19,533	15.9	1871-80	3565	38.5	1871-80
1891	28,023	43.5	1881-90	4878	36.8	1881-90
1901	35,144	25.4	1891-1900	5615	15.1	1891-1900

Who were these new employees? A survey of the census returns for St Mary's in 1881 shows that only 27% of Howard's employees were born in Bedford. Of the remaining 73%, 28% moved into the town from the county, and the remaining 45% were born out of county. With a total workforce of 650 in 1881, this suggests that some 475 men (i.e. 73% of the total), most of them skilled engineers, had moved to Bedford to work at the Iron Works. These men with their families would certainly amount to several thousands of new residents, and new houses for them sprang up near to the factory, such as the patriotically named Britannia and Victoria Roads.

Table 2, below, reveals that it was the lowest level of workers, the unskilled labourers, who formed the largest category (30.8 % of the total workforce). Of these, almost half (44%) had been born in Bedford itself. The remaining categories, consisting of the more highly skilled workmen, were all recruited largely from outside the town, and in the case of the boiler makers, all were born outside the county itself. There is a strong correlation between the level of skill of each employee and the distance between the birthplace and the Iron Works.

It was in the decade of the 1870s that agriculture in the county together with the fortunes of Howard's business reached the peak of their success, both of them marked very strongly in 1874 by two significant events in Bedford. The first was the opening in April of the new much larger Corn Exchange on the north side of St Paul's Square, a more fitting and practical setting for the buying and selling of grain, and an excellent venue for public meetings and concerts, as it still is.²¹ It replaced

²¹ Pictured on the dust cover.

its much smaller predecessor which then became known as the Floral Hall, and was demolished in 1904.²²

Table 2. Employees of Howard's Britannia Iron Works living in the parish of St Mary's Bedford in 1881

<i>Category</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage of total</i>	<i>Place of birth as a percentage for each category of worker</i>		
			<i>Bedford</i>	<i>Beds</i>	<i>Out of county</i>
Labourer	52	30.8	44	42	14
(Engine) fitter	40	23.7	25	18	57
(Black)smith	18	10.7	22	28	50
Iron moulder	10	5.9	40	10	50
Clerk (inc. apprentices)	6	3.6	34	16	50
Boiler maker	6	3.6	0	0	100
Others	37	21.7	15	30	55
Total	169	100.0	N/A	N/A	N/A

Figures extracted from the census of 1881, Bedford St Mary's parish. The sample comprises all 169 men in this parish who are identified in the census as employed by Howard's. 'Others' contains the remaining job categories in which there were fewer than six people: they were skilled workers such as engine drivers – and also Edward and John Bousfield. The table shows: in columns 2 and 3 the number and percentage of employees in each job category; and in columns 4 to 6 the percentage in each job category who were Bedford-born or in-migrants from elsewhere in Bedfordshire or out of county.

The second event that summer was the staging of the Royal Show, held every year in a different location by the Royal Agricultural Society (RAS), as a showcase for agricultural products, implements as well as livestock. Founded in 1838, the RAS played a leading role in the development of British agriculture and of a vibrant rural economy through the dissemination of a scientific approach and the promotion of new ideas. The view of Bedford printed in the *Illustrated London News* of 11 July 1874, and chosen as the dustcover for this volume, demonstrates overtly the confidence and pride of the town and covertly the prominence of the Britannia Iron Works nationally in producing innovative agricultural implements and machinery.

Only four years later saw the beginning of the prolonged period of agricultural depression which ended the 'Golden Years of Farming' as they are sometimes known. The problem was that the price of corn was being undercut over much of Europe by cheap grain flooding the market from the USA, the product of the opening up of the fertile prairies by the Union Pacific Railway, which was completed in 1869, connecting the eastern and western seaboard. In 1877, before the effects had made themselves felt, the price of corn on the English markets was 56s per quarter. From then on it dropped steadily until in 1886 it was selling at 31s per quarter, and declined even further until in 1893 it reached a trough of 26s. Some arable farmers converted land to pasture: most were forced to reduce their costs to take account

²² See Plate 10.

of the lower income they were receiving. This meant both cutting the wages of their agricultural labourers, and reducing the number of those employed. Some went bankrupt, or simply gave up farming.²³

As a result, many of the 'ag. labs' lost their tied cottages as well as their jobs, and moved into towns seeking work there as general labourers and swelling the urban proletariat. Businesses like Howard's suffered as farmers reduced their expenditure on new implements and machines. Charlotte comments on this in 1884: 'Farming was never so un-remunerative, & the free trade which has over stocked the corn market seems not an unmitigated blessing since with cheapness of many articles of food there is great scarcity of work both in fields & Factories.'²⁴ Farming began to recover in the mid-1890s, but never reached the success it had enjoyed in the mid-Victorian years.

Another important development in the history of Bedford in the 1880s also involved new families attracted to live in the town, English families who had spent their working lives abroad, in India particularly, as civil servants or in the army. This migration had already started earlier, but it was given a great boost when the Harpur Trust charity changed its rules in 1873 to allow families from abroad to educate their sons and daughters at a heavily subsidised rate, even if neither they nor their parents had been born in the town. Residents objected, but the 'squatters' (as some derisively called them) came and stayed. They settled predominantly in three areas north of the river: the Waterloo area on the north bank of the river, close to the newly improved Embankment; the large houses on either side of Kimbolton Road, north of the Union workhouse, on the northern edge of the town; and the area east of the railway line and north of Bromham Road, known as 'the poets'. Each family employed several servants, and the influx of both classes is demonstrated in Table 1. The population of Bedford rose by a massive 43.5% between 1881 and 1891.

The squatters brought with them a whiff of the exotic. 'You invited friends to "tiffin" rather than to lunch; you said you were going down to "the bazaar" when you were going shopping in the High Street.'²⁵ The raffish dandy made his appearance:

In Bedford, you're aware, for *Dandies such as I!*
The proper thing is, every day, to toddle up the High –
Sundays may do for Cads, but not for me or you,
So titivated in our best, we show them "who is who",
Walking up the High, Walking up the High,
Is *the* thing every afternoon, for Dandies such as I!!!²⁶

The two groups were very different. The Anglo-Indians were middle- or upper middle-class Anglicans, living north of the river, while the Britannia's employees were largely working class, with a small number of professionals, such as Edward Bousfield, many living south of the river. The Anglo-Indians were a visible part of Bedford life, but the Bousfields never mention them, even though their grandson

²³ See James Collett-White, *Bedfordshire in the 1880s* (Bedford: BLARS, 2006).

²⁴ See diary entry for 25 November 1884.

²⁵ Patricia Bell, 'Aspects of Anglo-Indian Bedford', in *Worthington George Smith and Other Studies*, BHRS vol. 57 (Bedford: The Society, 1978), p. 191.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 182. See Plate 8, a view looking north from the bridge.

George attended Bedford School in the 1890s, where the vast majority of the squatters' sons were educated.

The spirit of the 1880s was encapsulated in the person of Joshua Hawkins. He was himself a squatter (though not an Anglo-Indian) in that he came to Bedford (in 1879) in order to educate his sons at Bedford School. Up to this point he had been a Methodist minister, but in Bedford until his death in 1892 he gave up this part of his earlier life and identified himself with the town. He became co-proprietor (with Edwin Ransom) of the *Bedfordshire Times and Independent* and was an outstanding Mayor, serving five terms in that office between 1883 and 1890. He was a speculative builder, responsible for many of the large villas in Lansdowne, Dynevor and Linden roads. Hawkins' greatest achievement was to promote Bedford, to its own citizens, as much as to others outside the town. In 1883 the new bridge over the river was opened, to extend Prebend Street over the river, easing the pressure of traffic over the town bridge, which increased as Southend developed. In 1888, another important development was the opening of Bedford Park in the north of the town, described at the time as 'Bedford's Bois de Boulogne', and the impressive De Parys Avenue leading up to its main entrance gates as 'Bedford's Champs Elysees'.

The *Bedfordshire Times* office published a pamphlet, *Bedford in 1888*, to mark its opening by the Marquess of Tavistock. It is euphoric in its tone and bursting with energy and confidence:

High Street affords clear evidence of the giant-like strides of trade and enterprise in Bedford. In the principal streets of the town it may almost be said that a shop is not to be got for love or money. The handsome new business premises that are constantly erected, the palatial shop fronts that are ever being inserted ... together with the stagnation in the Bankruptcy Court so far as Bedford is concerned, all betoken great commercial activity.²⁷

Charlotte's diaries cover much the same period as that of Hawkins' residence in Bedford. She met him and comments favourably on him,²⁸ but the picture she paints of the plight of the underclass, the alcoholics and the vagrants in the casual wards of the workhouse, is completely the reverse of Hawkins' promotion of the buoyant state of Bedford's commercial and business life. So is the situation in the countryside, suffering from the baneful effects of the depression in agriculture – poverty, unemployment and, indeed, bankruptcy. Both accounts are true, but both are partial. Hawkins' picture is the more visible: Charlotte's the more grounded in experience, and the more fundamentally significant.

The family in Bedford before the beginning of the diaries, 1858–1878

On their arrival in Bedford in September 1858 the Bousfields lived at 43 Cauldwell Street, on the south side of the river, convenient both for the town centre, which was just north of the bridge, and for the Britannia Iron Works, where Edward was employed.²⁹ The first of their daughters, named Charlotte after her mother and known as 'Lottie', was born here. Five doors away, at no. 53, lived another family with growing children and a father employed by Howard's: these were the Mortons,

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

²⁸ See diary entry for 24 April 1880.

²⁹ See map on Plate 23.

who were to remain close friends of the Bousfields for years to come: one of the Mortons' sons some 30 years later was to marry Lottie.

In 1863, the Bousfield family moved to the new house which was to be their home throughout their time in Bedford. Edward had bought several plots of land from the estate 'formerly occupied by the County Asylum'³⁰ which was closed in 1860,³¹ and whose land became the first building estate south of the river. As Charlotte put it in her diary entry for 12 September 1883:

Twenty years ago this very month this house was finished, & we took possession of it as our own, calling it 'Alpha Villa', because [it was] the very first house built in a neighbourhood newly divided into building sites, most of which are now covered by streets of houses, inhabited probably by more than 800 people.

The photograph in Plate 3 shows the house today. It was large, appropriate to the size of the family.³² In 1871, it housed no less than twelve people. Eight were family – Edward and Charlotte; the three sons, of whom the two younger ones were described as scholars. Will (aged 17) was described as an apprentice agricultural engineer – he had left Bedford Modern School, 'with every first prize in the Modern School except that for writing',³³ and he was working for Howard's until he won a scholarship to Caius College Cambridge in the following year. By 1871, there were three daughters: Charlotte, known as Lottie; Harriet Mary known as Hattie, born in 1865; and the youngest child, Florence Jane, known as Edris, born in 1869, who died at the age of three in 1872. In addition, there was one boarder, sixteen-year-old Lee Osborn, born in Bradford, whose occupation was described in the same terms as Will's. Three young women (all aged 20) served the household; one as a dress-maker, a second as cook and kitchen maid and the third as housemaid. All of them were born in villages within ten miles of Bedford. Finally, the Bousfields employed a man who acted as gardener, coachman and odd job man, who lived out (Howcutt is the first of these mentioned by name in the diaries). Edward's status had gone up, or perhaps he had been promoted, as he now describes himself as 'engineer, manager of iron-works', whereas in 1861 his occupation was simply stated as 'mechanical engineer'.

It was a busy and a lively household, but Charlotte resolved to take on an extra responsibility: she and Edward undertook to provide for the religious needs of the growing population of what was becoming a new suburb. Charlotte was mindful of what her grandmother had done in Seaton fifty years earlier, in holding services in her own house, an action which must have resonated with her, in that it had led to the marriage of her own mother and father. And so, in the late 1860s, she and Edward began to do the same.

Perhaps it was the death of Edris in 1872³⁴ which inspired them to take the next step – to build a church. Trustees were appointed, and in 1873 Edward sold them some of the land which he had bought on the other side of Offa Road from Alpha

³⁰ *Bedfordshire Times and Independent*, 3 June 1873.

³¹ Its 422 patients were moved to the newly built Three Counties Asylum at Arlesey.

³² See family trees in Appendix 1.

³³ See diary entry for 1 July 1880.

³⁴ See Plate 16.

Villa. The building was begun in May, and with Edward's financial help completed within the space of six months and opened on 12 November 1873.³⁵

The project drew in family members as well as friends and business associates. John Howard was chairman of the trustees, Edward's sister, Sarah Jane Barker (aunt Jenny), laid one of the foundation stones, and the tower was dedicated to John Moore, the recently deceased husband of another of Edward's sisters, Frances Mary (aunt Fanny). It was dedicated as the Southend Wesleyan Chapel, and so gave its name to the new suburb, which was, as the *Bedfordshire Times and Independent* put it, 'a more agreeable name than "The Old Asylum Ground" hitherto in vogue'.³⁶ Charlotte referred to it fondly many times throughout her diaries as 'our little chapel'. It formed a focus in her life, involved the whole family, and is still today an active place of worship.³⁷

When the diaries begin, five years later, they open not in Bedford, but at the resort of Ventnor in the Isle of Wight, in the middle of a family gathering to celebrate Charlotte's and Edward's Silver Wedding in March 1878. Ventnor was well known to the family, and well loved, the change of scene and climate usually proving beneficial to their health. By this time the children were often living away from home.

Of the five, Will is 24. He has had a distinguished academic record at Cambridge, where he read mathematics, and graduated in 1876 as sixteenth Wrangler (that is, sixteenth in rank order out of all the mathematics undergraduates in his year). He was awarded a scholarship to work for Joseph Whitworth's engineering works in Manchester, and later lectured in Mathematics and Engineering at University College, Bristol, but decided to take up the law as a career, and is living away from home in Clifton, Bristol, where he is tutoring the son of a retired army officer (Captain Alcock) while reading for his law examinations. His engineering background, and his father's experience of many patent applications, were useful ones for a barrister who would specialise in patent law, though he may not have anticipated this at the time.

Ted, aged 23, is living at home, and commuting to London where he is studying medicine, having spent some time as assistant to a Bedford doctor, James Coombs.³⁸

John, the youngest of the three boys, aged 20, is staying with the Mortons in Chelmsford. Alfred Morton is now a partner in the firm of Coleman and Morton, so it is likely that John was working for him, perhaps as an apprentice.

Lottie, the elder of the two girls, is seventeen, and is spending time with her brother Will in Clifton.

The youngest is Hattie, a thirteen-year-old school girl in Bedford.

Charlotte is concerned about the love affairs which the two elder boys have recently begun. Will's girl friend and later wife was Florence Kelly, the daughter of a wealthy advertising agent and parliamentary printer, with homes on the Isle of Wight (Clarendon Lodge, Shanklin) as well as in Maida Vale in London. The first contact between the families was a chance meeting of Florence's father and Will's

³⁵ See Plate 4 and map on Plate 23.

³⁶ *Bedfordshire Times and Independent*, 3 June 1873.

³⁷ See Plate 4.

³⁸ Dr Coombs (1813–1905) MD, alderman and Mayor of Bedford 1871, 1889 and 1891.

mother on the 'tramway car' from Ryde Pier.³⁹ Will and Florence were married in 1879. Ted's girl friend, who also became his wife, was Clara Henman, who lived with her widowed mother in Bromham, then a village, now a suburb, north of Bedford. They met through attending services at the St Paul's chapel in Bedford (Harpur Street),⁴⁰ and were married in 1882.

Edward Bousfield

The life of Charlotte's husband Edward certainly does not take centre stage in her diaries, yet in his career he made an important contribution both locally and nationally to the prosperity of Bedford's first and major industrial plant through his hard work and inventive genius.

The major factor in the success of Howard's was the innovative nature of its products, and Edward's contribution to the flow of inventions was very significant. Between 1861, when his name first appears on a patent application, and 1889, when James Howard died, 74 patents had Edward's name on them, and from then until 1898, when he took out his last patent, 14 out of the 21 were in his name alone.

The range of implements in whose development he played a part is very wide. It includes horse-drawn ploughs, rakes, hoes and harrows; reaping and mowing machines; steam boilers, including 'Howard's Safety Boiler'; a steam-driven tractor, 'Howard's Farmer's Engine', and steam ploughs, i.e. ploughs drawn by two steam engines, one at each side of the field. Edward's name is on the patent application for this important invention, for which he probably takes the credit. When the diaries begin, in 1878, Edward was occupied with the task of designing a sheaf-binding reaper, for harvesting corn and hay and binding the sheaves and this continued until 1884. Other manufacturers were also producing reapers, and the Royal Agricultural Society decided to hold trials at the Royal Show held in 1884 at Shrewsbury. Edward was bitterly disappointed that his reaper only came second. Charlotte reports her husband's despair and his decision to retire from Howard's in the following year, in her diary for 20 October 1884, where he also hints at 'half formed plans' for his retirement, which must allude to his undertaking training for the Bar, in which he succeeded in 1887.⁴¹

Edward's plans were not, however, fully realised. He did become a barrister, but seems only to have had two briefs, and his retirement from Howard's did not take place until 1898, though he worked part-time as a consultant for a while.⁴² He clearly loved mechanical engineering more than anything else, and turned to new challenges in this field in the 1890s, when he became interested in 'explosion engines' as they were known – i.e. internal combustion engines. What made him disillusioned was not simply the disappointment of the trials; it was his belief that his work was not properly appreciated by the Howard brothers⁴³ – he chafed at being an employee. The depression in agriculture must also have been worrying: Howard's were having to dismiss employees, or put them on short time.⁴⁴ Edward's years at

³⁹ See diary entry for 23 October 1878.

⁴⁰ See Plate 5.

⁴¹ See diary entries for 24 October and 5 November 1887.

⁴² See diary entry for 6 March 1889.

⁴³ See diary entry for 7 October 1879.

⁴⁴ See diary entry for 25 November 1884.

the Britannia Ironworks were its golden years, and he may well have recognised that they were coming to an end. All that is left of it now is the archway, pictured in Plate 12.

The Diaries

Charlotte Bousfield's diaries, reflective, lively and personal, describe the lives of the members of her middle-class family, based in Victorian Bedford. The study of the diaries straddles both family and local history: though the close focus is on the family, the social and political background is always present. There are a number of major themes which it is appropriate to highlight in this introduction to their vivid portrayal by Charlotte herself.

The first is the family's religious life. The Bousfields' fervent Methodism must have found the religious climate in the town congenial. Bedford itself was after all 'Bunyan's Town', and not far from Huntingdon, the birth-place of Oliver Cromwell. The Ecclesiastical Census of 1851 provides the best evidence for this, even though it records the situation some years earlier than the Bousfields' arrival in the town. It shows that 40.5% of the population of England and Wales attended a religious service on that day (Bedford registered slightly more, 43%). Of those who attended, just over 50% nationally were Anglicans (Bedford's Anglican congregations were much less numerous – only 33% of the total). In the national census Methodism was by far the strongest of the nonconformist denominations, 18% of the total; in Bedford it was the Congregationalists who were the strongest of the dissenting groups, numbering 26%, the Methodist following on with 19% of the total.⁴⁵

The Bousfields' religious activities were naturally centred on their own church, just over the road, but they attended most of the other Methodist chapels in the town, and Edward was an active lay preacher, travelling to many local villages. Charlotte, assisted by her daughters when they were at home, was involved in a range of activities, among them the Sunday School and Mothers' meetings, and a variety of fund-raising projects.

It was a blow to her in 1879, therefore, when her work for Southend was criticised as being too interfering – 'we took too much upon us' as she paraphrases the criticisms of some of the congregation.⁴⁶ She was forced to accept that 'we may never again take an active part in managing its affairs'. It was not easy for her to withdraw completely, and in January 1881 she got herself involved in attempting to settle a seating dispute at Southend.⁴⁷ By this time, Edward had taken on administrative responsibility for the local Methodist churches, as Circuit Steward, and in the following month Charlotte became involved again in stirring up trouble in a meeting to discuss raising funds for the circuit, which appears to have embarrassed her husband and to have rumbled on through the summer.⁴⁸ Charlotte was not able to devote herself to the cause which was so dear to her heart.

⁴⁵ These figures are taken from D.W. Bushby, *Elementary Education in Bedford, 1868–1903* and *The Ecclesiastical Census, Bedfordshire, March 1851*, BHRS vol. 54 (Bedford: The Society, 1975) and Joyce Godber, *The Story of Bedford* (Luton: White Crescent Press Ltd, 1978).

⁴⁶ See diary entry for 22 June 1879.

⁴⁷ See diary entry for 13 January 1881.

⁴⁸ See diary entry for 20 February 1881.

She was further disappointed when in the following year John followed his two elder brothers in moving to London to work. She writes on 1 July 1882 'To-day another has flown our home nest. I had hoped we might have had one Son living in Bedford who could have been a comfort near to us ... in years to come.' Her diary entry for 28 September 1882 reveals her despondency:

Of late I have not felt much inclined for writing in my Diary. Amidst much to be thankful for as ever, many of the circumstances surrounding the daily routine have not been joyous & I have often a feeling of depression amounting to sadness, the cause doubtless partly in myself.

But, at this low point in her life, at the age of 54, Charlotte was about to embark upon a cause which would dominate her life and fully occupy her time and energies for years to come – the temperance movement, the second of the major themes. In her diary for 7 October 1882 she writes somewhat tentatively: 'I do not remember that I have written of the fact that some weeks since I allowed my name to be put on the Committee of the Mission of the "Blue Ribbon Army" which has as yet been little more than talked about in Bedford.'

There is no doubt that alcoholism (or intemperance as it was called at the time) was a serious social problem. In the 1880s, when Charlotte joined the Blue Ribbon army, the average working-class family spent about a quarter of their total income on alcohol, and there were frequently voiced fears that many were 'drinking themselves to death'.

But the origins of the temperance movement in England date back some fifty years earlier to the 1830s, when intemperance began to be seen as a problem, increasingly evident with the spread of industrialisation, where factory owners demanded punctual, alert and efficient workers. The temperance movement first appears in the northern industrial towns, introduced by middle-class men who saw drunkenness not as a disease, but as caused by moral weakness. Their aim was to curb widespread drunkenness in working-class men; not to cure drunkards, which they believed to be impossible, but to control drinking. Many working-class men believed that the leaders were hypocritical, as heavy drinking was often equally a part of the lives of their middle-class brothers. The view began to spread, particularly among working-class political groups, that the real problems that were the cause of alcohol abuse were social ones. In contrast to the middle-class explanation, they believed that it was problems such as poverty, bad sanitation and housing conditions that caused the misery from which alcohol provided a temporary escape, and that must be addressed first.

Another interpretation of the most appropriate solution to the problems was introduced by Joseph Livesey, a working-class cheese seller from Preston, in the later 1830s. He believed that drinking in moderation, as supported by society in general, and by the medical profession in particular, actually increased the incidence of drunkenness. Only total abstinence was acceptable, and his followers were called upon to sign a pledge promising to abstain from all alcoholic beverages. Since its foundation in 1935 the work of Alcoholics Anonymous has always taken this line: 'all available ... testimony indicates that alcoholism ... cannot be cured in the ordinary sense of the term, but that it can be arrested through total abstinence from

alcohol in any form'.⁴⁹ The story has it that it was one of Livesey's followers who coined one of the most famous words to be connected with the temperance movement. A reformed drinker, he was one day fervently advocating total abstinence when he is said to have stuttered over the word 'total'. The result 't-t-t-total' was picked up by Livesey and very soon came into the language as the word 'teetotal'.

The third approach to the problem was that of prohibition. Copying activity in the USA, British temperance advocates founded the United Kingdom Alliance in 1853, pledging to work through Parliament to outlaw liquor in England – shades of the America of the 1920s and 1930s. The leader of the group, which thought of itself as a political party, was Sir Wilfrid Lawson, who introduced the first of his Permissive Bills in 1864. This was intended to introduce what is known as a 'local veto'. Its principle was to give to the local electors in small areas such as the parish in rural districts, or small boroughs, the power to control the liquor traffic in their areas, though this was never passed into law.

Most of Charlotte's work in the temperance movement falls within the second of these three approaches. In 1882 her introduction to the movement was through the Blue Ribbon Army, an organisation which had been founded in the USA by an immigrant Irishman, Francis Murphy, and whose message was that of total abstinence, which it combined with evangelical preaching and singing, an approach known as Gospel Temperance. Murphy arrived from the States in 1881 to introduce it to the UK. Working initially in northern England, he went on to campaign in Manchester, Dublin and Norwich as well as undertaking a lecture tour through Scotland before returning to the USA. The (in)famous poet William McGonagall heard him in Dundee, and lauded his campaign, as follows:

A Tribute to Mr Murphy and The Blue Ribbon Army

ALL hail to Mr Murphy, he is a hero brave,
That has crossed the mighty Atlantic wave,
For what purpose let me pause and think –
I answer, to warn the people not to taste strong drink.

And, I'm sure, if they take his advice, they never will rue
The day they joined the Blue Ribbon Army in the year 1882;
And I hope to their colours they will always prove true,
And shout, Hurrah ! for Mr Murphy and the Ribbon of Blue.⁵⁰

Charlotte's diary entry reports on 14 November 1882 that she took Mr McGonagall's advice and with it the pledge. The words she would have said, those of the Blue Ribbon pledge, were:

With charity to all and malice toward none, I promise by divine help to abstain from all intoxicating liquors and beverages, and to discountenance their use by others. The Lord help me to keep this pledge, for Jesus' sake.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Alcoholics Anonymous General Service Conference-approved literature: *The Twelve Steps of AA*.

⁵⁰ McGonagall in his *Reminiscences* describes an entertainment he provided in a public house in Dundee in the holiday week after New Year's Day 1882, while the Blue Ribbon army were based in the town. During the course of this he provided 'a good recitation' in which it is likely that this poem received its first performance. It is included in his first volume of collected verse, *Poetic Gems* (1890).

⁵¹ Quoted in Lilian Lewis Shiman, *Crusade against Drink in Victorian England* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988), p. 116.

The blue ribbons which signified having taken this pledge were pinned on to the dress or coat, as poppies are for Remembrance Sunday.⁵² The significance of the symbol was a biblical one. In the Book of Numbers, God exhorts Moses to persuade the children of Israel to 'put upon the fringe of the borders [of their garments] a ribband of blue ... that ye remember all the commandments of the Lord ... and that ye seek not only after your own heart ... after which you used to go whoring [but] that ye be holy unto your God'.⁵³

In September 1883 Charlotte joined another temperance organisation, one specifically focused on the problems for women which were posed by alcoholism – the British Women's Temperance Association (BWTA). This was also founded in the USA, and first appeared in England in 1876. Its purpose was specifically to help women fight the evils of drink and encourage their children to abstain. It was politically active and lobbied politicians and submitted petitions. Charlotte was instrumental in forming a branch in Bedford. She continued to be involved with both these organisations, though more closely with the BWTA, as she herself chronicles. She spent many days travelling the country (York, Liverpool, Nottingham, Gloucester etc.) attending meetings and speaking.

Charlotte's most demanding undertaking, however, was the establishing in London of a home for inebriate women, which opened in 1886. At the time, there were very few of these in existence, particularly for women, and Charlotte gave herself heart and soul to the task of attempting to cure the women, mostly middle-class, like herself. For three months, indeed, she ran the home herself. It must have been an eye-opening experience for her to live with chronic alcoholism, such as she saw there, with the patients' desperate and degrading attempts to smuggle drink in. The plight of middle-class women was in some ways worse than that of working-class women, for they had to keep up appearances, and not let their addiction show if possible. Nor were there any easy excuses for their condition – they were not poor, they did not live in cold, cramped or uncomfortable homes. There were other reasons, of course – a loveless marriage, boredom, lack of a fulfilling life, but these were not topics which ladies such as these would be able to discuss. Perhaps they may have been able to talk about it to each other and to Charlotte while they were patients, and this may have helped some of them. She showed them compassion and attempted to understand the reason for their sad state.⁵⁴ In 1890 her handling of an incident at the home led to criticism of her, and she resigned. This seems, at the least, a most ungrateful attitude on the part of the other members of the committee in view of the great commitment both she and Ted had made to the welfare of the patients over the previous four years.

Three years later, the BWTA split when a radical new President, influenced by developments in the USA, persuaded members to change the Association's policy, by including a raft of other social and political issues in its work, including women's suffrage. Charlotte and other members left to form a new grouping, the Women's Total Abstinence Union (WTAU).

All of this work was related to the total abstinence aspect of temperance, but

⁵² See diary entry for 26 February 1883.

⁵³ Numbers xv 37–40.

⁵⁴ See diary entry for 6 September 1886.

Charlotte also became involved with the third approach, that of prohibition, and the control of supply of alcohol. The affair of the Southend Hotel in 1886 is an example. With the wife of the Mayor of Bedford, Mrs Ransom, she was successful in taking out a summons against the landlord of a local public house, the Southend Hotel, for selling liquor out of hours. This resulted in a fine and the endorsement of his licence, but unfortunately Charlotte wrote a letter to the local press suggesting that the defending solicitor, who happened to be a Methodist himself, had been acting unworthily and had been serving not God but mammon. The diary entries for 4 and 7 September, 29 October, 22 November and 7 December 1886 record the whole saga. In the following year, Charlotte also began to take part in the Brewsters' Sessions, in opposing the extension of licences and the granting of new ones.⁵⁵

A late example of Charlotte's concern for the underclass in Victorian society is the part she played in the reform of the corrupt management of Bedford workhouse. The last few pages of her diary record this, starting with the entry for 19 December 1894.

Charlotte Bousfield's diaries deal with a variety of themes in addition to the principal ones of religion and temperance (summarised above), and reveal many facets of life in the late Victorian period. Some of these are surprising, for example, the efficiency of communications, in the years before the telephone, email and the internal combustion engine. The postal system was excellent – telegrams were delivered within a few hours and letters and postcards very quickly – for example, 'John went back to his work Tuesday morning & the same day we received a letter' (16 April 1884).

Most important was the railway, which made possible the extensive travelling which the Bousfields enjoyed. Bedford was gradually developing into a commuter town and Ted was able to live at home in 1878 and travel to London every day to study for his medical qualifications. The service was neither as quick nor as frequent as it is today, however. Fast trains took 1 hour 20 minutes to St Pancras, twice as long as they do today, and there were only four or five trains in the morning rather than four or five every hour.

For many people in the county, it was the local lines connecting towns and villages which were more useful than the main line. The map in Plate 20 shows how extensive the railway system was, with a station within reach of most of the Bedfordshire villages. Blunham, Sandy, Potton and Gamlingay all had stations on the LNWR, as did Ampthill, Sharnbrook and Oakley on the Midland line until Dr Beeching's reforms of the early 1960s cut so many of them, as lamented by Flanders and Swann:

I'll travel no more from Littleton Badsey to Openshaw.
At Long Stanton I'll stand well clear of the doors no more.
No whitewashed pebbles, no Up and no Down
From Formby Four Crosses to Dunstable Town.⁵⁶

Horse-drawn vehicles of various sorts were the daily form of transport for many, including the Bousfields, who used both a barouche (a four-wheeled closed carriage

⁵⁵ See diary entry for 4 August 1887.

⁵⁶ From *Slow Train* written in 1964.

driven by a coachman) and also a smaller two-wheeled chaise, which Charlotte could drive herself, sometimes using it to travel to the family's second home in Aspley Heath (a village near Woburn, close to the Buckinghamshire border)⁵⁷ in preference to the train. Bicycles⁵⁸ and tricycles were also used and people were accustomed to walking much greater distances than has become normal in recent times. The diary entry for 28 January 1880 illustrates the variety of transport modes chosen according to the purpose – including skating.⁵⁹

The Bousfields were typical of many middle-class families of the time in that the female members of the family were not employed in earning a living, whereas the male members were, but they were well educated up to the age of 18. Charlotte and her daughters were able to spend time away from home, visiting and staying with relatives and also in holidays at home and abroad. This is not evident in the abridgement, because most of the extensive coverage of visiting and holidays has been excised. In 1880, for example, Charlotte spent six weeks between mid February and early April at Ventnor, which she describes as 'our sanatorium', with the two girls who were unwell, and another fortnight at Jersey in October.

In later years, as Charlotte became heavily involved with the BWTA, she spent much more time away from home, visiting and speaking at branches all over the country. She had already an extensive network of friends in Bedford and relatives in London and Southport, but now she began to develop many more. She writes on 26 September 1887 from Aspley Heath, 'Since we came here I have been away so many times that I have had no opportunity of engaging in any work (beyond helping a little at the Bazaar) & this will continue ... until the middle of Nov.'

In October 1887 alone she visited London, Nottingham, Gloucester and Yorkshire, travelling around each county, and staying several days in each place with BWTA members. Her network was not only on a national scale, but an international one: she hosted a visit from an American barrister and temperance supporter, Mrs Foster,⁶⁰ and from friends living in South Africa and Europe.

The censuses well illustrate the mobility of other members of the family as well as Charlotte. On census day in 1871 (Sunday 2 April) only Edward, Will and John were at home. Ted was living in Gorton, a suburb to the east of Manchester, apprenticed to a chemist, and Lottie was staying in Chelmsford with the Mortons, who had recently moved there. Charlotte and Edris, aged two, were staying with Charlotte's father and step-mother, the Rev. Robert Collins and his wife Mary. Hattie, aged only six, was staying in Hayes, Middlesex, with an unidentified family.⁶¹ In 1881, most of the children were staying away from home. William was married and living in Cricklewood, Ted was practising in Bristol, and Lottie was staying with him. Harriet was at school in Jersey. In 1891, the numbers at Alpha Villa on census day had increased. By then, the three boys were all married and living in London, but father Edward and the two daughters were there, together with their old friend Emma Morton and

⁵⁷ See Plate 14.

⁵⁸ See Plate 13.

⁵⁹ See Plate 9.

⁶⁰ See diary entry for 21 June 1890.

⁶¹ Hattie was staying with a widow, Emma E. Hewins, registered as having been born in Balderstone, a village near Newark, and her occupation, unusual for a woman then as now, as ironmonger. Perhaps she had been an employee of the Bousfields in their ironmonger's business.